

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 OSLO 02105 301906Z

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ACTION EUR-10

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EURE-00 NSC-07 NSCE-00 SP-01 PM-03

L-02 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SAM-1 SAJ-01

ACDA-10 TRSE-00 DRC-01 /062 W
----- 090008

P R 301209Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY OSLO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8269

SECDEF PRIORITY

INFO USMISSION NATO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

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USNMR SHAPE

USDOCO SOUTH

C O N F I D E N T I A L OSLO 2105

LIMDIS

MILITARY ADDRESSEES ALSO FOR POLADS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: NATO PFOR MOPS SP NO

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PAGE 02 OSLO 02105 301906Z

SUBJ: SPANISH COOPERATION WITH NATO

REF: STATE 111601

BEGIN SUMMARY. IF WE ARE TO BRING THE NORWEGIANS AROUND ON COOPERATION WITH SPAIN, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE START WITH A CONVINCING CASE OF MILITARY NECESSITY AND STICK WITH IT. TO THIS END, I RECOMMEND THAT USNATO ASAIT RECEIPT OF THE DETAILED MILITARY RATIONALE BEFORE INITIATING INFORMAL SOUNDINGS WITH THE NORWEGIANS AND OTHER DELEGATIONS. SECRETARY SCHLESINGER'S VISIT TO NORWAY NEXT WEEK WOULD PROVIDE A VALUABLE OPPORTUNITY FOR PERSUADING THE DEFENSE MINISTER OF THE NEED FOR THE PROPOSED COOPERATION WITH SPAIN, RATHER THAN HAVING OUR PROPOSAL TRICKLE UP TO CABINET LEVEL WITH ADDED COMMENTARY SUGGESTING THAT US MOTIVES ARE, AGAIN, PRIMARILY POLITICAL. END SUMMARY.

1. A CONFRONTATION WITH THE NORWEGIANS OVER NATO COOPERATION WITH SPAIN HAS OF COURSE BEEN INEVITABLE. OVERCOMING NORWEGIAN OBJECTIONS, IN THIS ERA OF GOVERNMENTAL SENSITIVITY TO LEFTIST CRITICISMS, WILL BE DIFFICULT AT BEST. WHILE WE ARE NOT SANGUINE THAT ANY APPROACH WILL CONVINCE THE NORWEGIANS, THE DEPARTMENT'S PROPOSED SCENARIO HAS, AT LEAST, THE BEST CHANCE OF SUCCEEDING. IN PARTICULAR, THE DECISION TO SEEK POLITICAL APPROVAL FOR SPANISH PARTICIPATION IN A NAVOCFORMED EXERCISE BEFORE MILITARY PLANNING IS BEGUN (OR EVEN HINTED AT) IS SOUND, AS IS THE PLANNED EMPHASIS ON THE MILITARY NEED FOR THE PROPOSED COOPERATION.

2. WE MUST RECOGNIZE, I AM AFRAID, THAT DEVELOPMENTS IN PORTUGAL HAVE FURTHER COMPLICATED THE SITUATION. NORWEGIANS SEE JUSTIFICATION FOR THEIR ATTITUDE TOWARD PORTUGAL IN WHAT HAS OCCURRED THERE. AND THEY WILL CERTAINLY ARGUE THAT NOW IS THE WORST POSSIBLE TIME TO BEGIN COOPERATION WITH SPAIN--THEREBY HELPING TO STRENGTHEN A REGIME WHOSE DEMISE HAS BEEN HASTENED BY EVENTS NEXT DOOR. IT WILL TAKE EXTREMELY PERSUASIVE MILITARY ARGUMENTS TO OVERCOME NORWEGIAN POLITICAL OBJECTIONS.

3. IT IS NOT EXACTLY ACCURATE, IN OUR RECOLLECTION, THAT THE NORWEGIANS PROTESTED THE LACK OF MILITARY SIGNIFICANCE TO THE PROPOSED BARCELONA PORT VISIT; RATHER, THEIR POINT

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 OSLO 02105 301906Z

WAS THAT THEY PERCEIVED THAT THAT PROPOSAL WAS MOTIVATED PRIMARILY BY POLITICAL REASONS. IF WE ARE TO CLEAR THAT HURDLE THIS TIME, WE WILL NEED TO AVOID ENTIRELY THE EVOLUTIONARY ASPECTS OF OUR PROPOSAL AND STRESS INSTEAD THE STRATEGIC NEED. NOR SHOULD OUR RATIONALE AND ARGUMENTATION VARY SIGNIFICANTLY DURING THE COURSE OF WHAT WILL DOUBTLESS BE A LENGTHY PROCESS OF PERSUASION. I RECOMMEND, THEREFORE, THAT USNATO'S INFORMAL SOUNDINGS BE DELAYED UNTIL

RECEIPT OF THE DETAILED MILITARY RATIONALE PROMISED IN REFTTEL,
TO AVOID FUTURE INCONSISTENCIES WHICH MAY WEAKEN OUR CASE.

4. I ALSO RECOMMEND THAT SECRETARY SCHLESINGER TAKE THE
OCCASION OF HIS TALKS WITH DEFENSE MINISTER FOSTERVOLL NEXT
WEEK TO RAISE THE ISSUE, AGAIN DRAWING ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY ON
THE MILITARY NECESSITY FOR THE PROPOSED COOPERATION. HOW
PERSUASIVE FOSTERVOLL MIGHT SUBSEQUENTLY BE IN CONVINCING
HIS CABINET COLLEAGUES THAT US MOTIVES ARE PRACTICAL
AND RELEVANT FOR NORWAY, RATHER THAN POLITICAL, REMAINS
TO BE SEEN. A PERSONAL APPROACH FROM SECRETARY KISSINGER
TO FOREIGN MINISTER FRYDENLUND IN OTTAWA WOULD BE A
LOGICAL NEXT STEP.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ALLIANCE, RELATIONS WITH INTERNATIONAL ORGS, INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 30 MAY 1974
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974OSLO02105
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740136-0617
From: OSLO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t1974057/aaaaafwh.tel
Line Count: 129
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: STATE 111601
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <05 APR 2002 by cunninfx>; APPROVED <13 JUN 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SPANISH COOPERATION WITH NATO
TAGS: PFOR, MOPS, SP, NO, NATO
To: STATE DOD
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005